



HANFORD  
MILLS  
MUSEUM

# MILLWORK

THE NEWSLETTER OF HANFORD MILLS MUSEUM

Spring 2014

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## Liz Callahan Awarded Certificate of Commendation

The Museum Association of New York (MANY) has awarded Executive Director Liz Callahan a Certificate of Commendation. Liz has been the Executive Director at Hanford Mills since 2001, and under her leadership the Museum has expanded its historic power generation methods, rebuilt from the 2006 flood, and revised its mission to focus on sustainability and contemporary choices.

The judging panel noted that, "Hanford Mills Museum serves as an exemplary model of what a small institution can accomplish under the stewardship of a gifted, visionary and committed leader." The collaborative relationship between the Museum's Board of Trustees and professional staff was recognized for its success in offering the public a vision of the future of sustainable energy and resource utilization based on a solid view of the past.

"Liz's achievements at Hanford Mills Museum stand out, to me, as an educator, as an outstanding example of how a small museum can really thrive, not just survive today," says Marsha S. Stock, Ph.D., President of our Board of Trustees.



Catherine Gilbert, Director of the Museum Association of New York, with Liz Callahan.

The Museum Association of New York award program acknowledges exceptional programs and individuals who have made the state's museum community richer and more relevant. The awards promote innovative efforts of staff and volunteers and provide encouragement for the development of new projects.

## Preparing for a New Season

During the last week in April, the Museum staff hosted several groups on site. The Northeast Chapter of the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills (SPOOM) held its spring meeting at the Mill and then explored the historic site with a tour from the HMM staff. The meeting gave our staff the opportunity to reconnect with the chapter and fellow mill enthusiasts. The Watershed Agricultural Council also toured the Mill as part of its spring all-staff meeting. With the site spruced-up and our seasonal interpretive staff ready to get to work in the Mill, the Museum is poised to launch a great 2014 season. In addition to offering dozens more CROP programs off-site, and welcoming the hundreds of students who will visit the Museum on field trips in May and June, the Museum will celebrate the opening the **Rural Genius** exhibit on Memorial Day Weekend, offer several workshops, and celebrate our spot on New York's Path Through History with the new **Community Celebration**, June 14.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

May 15  
**Opening Day**

May 17  
**Cooking with the  
Royal Bride: A Fresh  
Spring Meal\***

May 25  
**Rural Genius Exhibit  
Opening Reception**

May 31-June 1  
**Steam Power 101\***

June 14  
**Community  
Celebration**

\*Pre-registration required.

To register for workshops,  
please visit:  
[www.hanfordmills.org](http://www.hanfordmills.org)  
Or call: 607.278.5744

## Bumper Crop of Fun Harvested at Ice Harvest Festival



This winter's cold temperatures were great for cultivating the ice crop and in early February more than 1,000 people helped harvest a bumper crop! By day's end the ice house was filled with hundreds of foot-square blocks of ice – weighing in at eight tons. Visitors also enjoyed horse-drawn sleigh rides, hot roasted peanuts, cooking demonstrations, and soup donated by 20+ restaurants. Thanks to the volunteers who helped to make this event safe and successful, the SUNY Delhi Ice Sculpting team, the restaurants that donated soup, and all who came to this annual winter tradition. Save the date for the next Ice Harvest Festival: February 7, 2015.



## Hanford Mills Selected for Conservation Assessment Program

Hanford Mills Museum has been chosen to participate in the 2014 Heritage Preservation's Conservation Assessment Program (CAP). This program provides funds for specialists to identify conservation needs of collections and historic buildings and to recommend ways to improve these conditions. The Museum joins the 2,800 institutions that have participated in CAP in its 22-year history. Heritage Preservation's CAP is supported through a cooperative agreement with the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Heritage Preservation's President, Lawrence L. Reger, praised Hanford Mills Museum for "making the vital work of caring for collections and sites a priority of their institution, even in these challenging financial times, and helping ensure that they are available to present and future generations."

The award from Heritage Preservation, and a matching grant from the A. Lindsay and Olive B. O'Connor Foundation, will support the work of professional conservators who will spend three days surveying the site and five days preparing comprehensive reports that will identify conservation priorities. The on-site consultation will enable Hanford Mills to evaluate our current collections care policies, procedures, and environmental conditions. The assessment reports will help the museum make appropriate improvements for the immediate, mid-range, and long-term care of their collections and historic structures.

"Hanford Mills Museum plans to weave the feedback and recommendations in the assessors' CAP reports into the Museum's 2015-2017 strategic planning priorities," says the Museum's Executive Director Liz Callahan. She added, "The recommendations from the expert CAP assessors also will help our not-for-profit historic site to leverage public and private funding to implement conservation priorities at the Museum."

## Introducing the Community Celebration

Hanford Mills is offering a new event, our Community Celebration, on June 14. Celebrating the history of Hanford Mills, East Meredith and the region, it will showcase the area's cultural opportunities, resources and local organizations. The day will feature live music, local vendors, hands-on activities, exhibits by local organizations, and demonstrations in the Mill. Thanks in part to a donation from Community Bank, admission to Community Celebration is free for everyone!

As part of the Community Celebration, we are happy to promote local garage sales in the vicinity of East Meredith. If you would like to have a garage sale promoted on June 14, please email [kajsah@hanfordmills.org](mailto:kajsah@hanfordmills.org) and we'll compile a list to share with visitors.

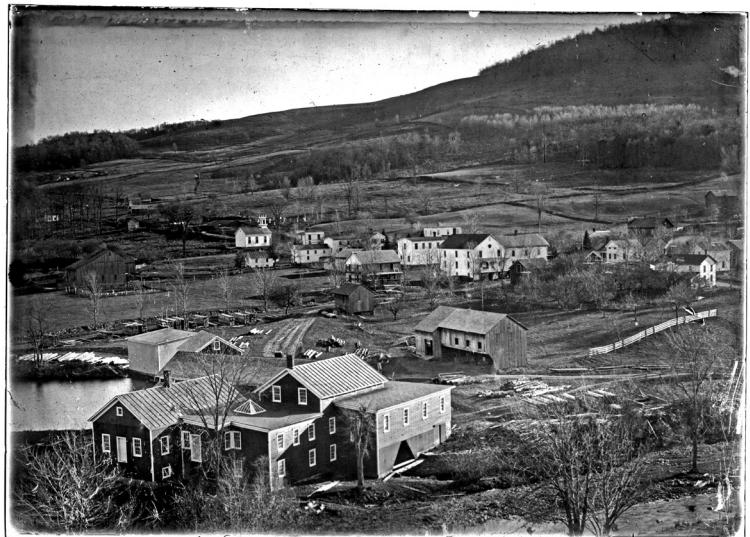
The community of East Meredith has a rich, long history dating back to the tiny farming hamlet called Briar Street that formed in the 1820s. As more people were attracted to the area, workshops, businesses, and community fixtures followed, including a general store, a blacksmith shop, a church, the school, a post office and the sawmill. By 1868, Briar Street received its new official name, East Meredith.

With the steady growth of the community, there was much anticipation of the railroad that would connect East Meredith to the Oneonta-Kingston line, which brought the expectation of a major boom to the community. The railroad came late to the hamlet, and expectations were dashed within a few years. Rather than creating more industrial complexes within the community, the railroad provided easier, faster transportation that allowed for cheaper items to come in from the already large industrial centers. The Hanford Brothers' mill also experienced this shift from production to purchasing from other sources, and built the Hardware Store and Feed Mill to adjust to these changes.

Over the next few decades, many stores closed their doors and some families relocated. However, there are still many fixtures within this community that remain intact and strong, including Hanford Mills and its historic site, the Presbyterian church, and many of the other homes and buildings that were central to the community at some point over the last 190 years. For those families who have stayed in the community, they hold strong connections to East Meredith's history that their ancestors helped create.

Hanford Mills Museum hopes that people in the area, new and old, will join us at the Community Celebration to celebrate not only the rich histories of East Meredith and surrounding villages, but the present activities as well.

Photograph taken by Horace Hanford, showing a birdseye view of the hamlet of East Meredith, ca. 1890.





## New Exhibition Highlights the Ingenuity Around Us

Hanford Mills Museum is excited to introduce its new exhibition, ***Rural Genius: Innovation, Invention, and Ingenuity in the Mill's Community***. The exhibition, conceptualized and curated by Alan Rowe, will tell the stories of three inventors connect to the Town of Meredith: George Paradox Hill, William Mickel and Larry MacClintock. Through the examples presented by these inventors, the exhibit explores the ways individuals seek to create, advance and respond to technological change. ***Rural Genius*** will also challenge visitors to think about what makes an inventor or an invention, and reminds us that innovation can come in many forms and may even be found in our own backyards.



The exhibition will include some local inventions, including the Museum's newly acquired Mickel barrel head cutter (at right). The machine was originally used in the sawmill of Andrew Thomson, who like the Hanfords, operated a combined gristmill, sawmill, and woodworking factory. The sawmill operated near New Kingston, NY until the 1950s and much of the machinery remained in the building until a flood in 1977 destroyed the mill and part of its accompanying dam. After the building was gone, Shirley Davis, granddaughter of Andrew Thomson, recovered what remnants of the old business she could, including the Mickel machine which she graciously donated to Hanford Mills Museum last fall.

William Mickel held the patent on his barrel head cutting machine, which included a unique solution to cutting and beveling the butter tub covers, but sold the rights to use the patent to other manufacturers. The pattern was originally designed to be operated by a hand crank, but eventually incorporated a flat belt system that could be powered by water wheels or steam engines, like the one that is operated at Hanford Mills today.

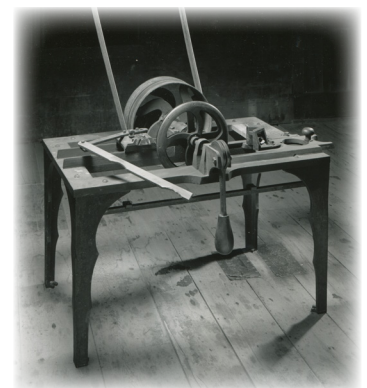
Come on by this summer to see this incredible machine and others. We hope they will inspire you to share and create your own stories of ingenuity.

***Rural Genius*** will open to the public Saturday, May 24.

An opening reception will be held on Sunday, May 25 from 2pm - 4pm. If you would like to attend the opening reception, please RSVP to Beth Rafter at [bethr@hanfordmills.org](mailto:bethr@hanfordmills.org) or call 607.278.5744.



William Mickel (left) developed a patent that improved the efficiency of his barrel head machines. You can see one of these machines (right) in action at Hanford Mills Museum.



## Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership

Hanford Mills is a program partner in the Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership (CROP) program to provide ten schools in Delaware and Schoharie Counties with a series of education programs throughout the year. Since the program started last fall, Mill staff have completed more than 100 of these programs and had nearly 1,400 student interactions. All of the programs include hands-on activities: students make butter, create miniature ice houses, operate simple machines like belts and pulleys, and filter water. We use these programs to teach students about the Mill's history, how it operates, the history of their own communities, and the importance of natural resources.



Hanford Mills education staff member, Madeline Rafter, guides the Andes Central School CROP group through the Museum's belt and pulley game.

We are finishing up the last of our school visits and are looking forward to hosting field trips for many of the CROP groups. We're excited that the CROP students will be able to see the Mill in person after learning about it over the school year.

## Spring Stabilization and Restoration Projects at the Museum

The Museum's spring building preservation and stewardship projects include the final steps in the stabilization of the Lumber Drying Shed; repositioning the Power House on a new foundation; and the restoration of one of the skylights in the Mill complex. Funding for these projects has come from a variety of sources, including the O'Connor Foundation, George A. and Margaret Mee Charitable Foundation, and an anonymous foundation.

Repositioning the Power House on a new foundation replacement is the first step in the creation of a sustainable energy and renewable resources learning lab in the Museum's former gift shop. The next step is implementing the exhibit and activity plans which were developed by Museum Studies students from the Cooperstown Graduate Program.

The wood-frame window restoration experts from Contractor's Millwork will remove and restore the large skylight in the Mill's box shop. The Museum also will continue the thoughtful and carefully studied stabilization of the Lumber Drying Shed with foundation reinforcement and repairs.

As these projects are implemented the Museum's staff will continue to plan late summer and fall work on the Post Office building (which houses the Museum's shop and offices and the East Meredith Post Office), including energy efficiency upgrades, accessibility improvements, and façade stabilization. A preservation architect's study and recommendations for the restoration of the façade was funded by a grant from the Preservation League of New York.

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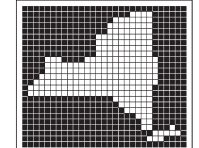
**RURAL GENIUS**  
Innovation, Invention, and Ingenuity in the  
Mill's Community

**Exhibit Opening**  
Memorial Day Weekend

**Saturday, June 14**  
**10am-5pm**

**COMMUNITY  
CELEBRATION**

State of the Arts



**NYSCA**

Funded in part by New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

**The Mission of Hanford Mills Museum is to inspire audiences of all ages to explore connections among energy, technology, natural resources and entrepreneurship in rural communities with a focus on sustainable choices.**